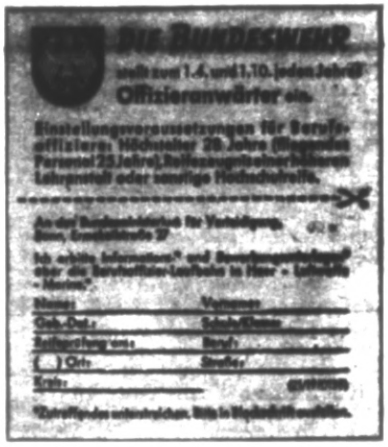
REC'D NOV 16 1960

DEMOCRATIC

GERMAN REPORT

Vol. IX NO. 20 | September 30th 1960 | Price: 15 Pf, 5c., 3d.

WEHRMACHT RECRUITING IN CANADA



Transatlantic recruits wanted for Adenauer's army — an advertisement from Toronto

The German advertisement reproduced on this page calls for young men to train as officers for the Bundeswehr, the West German Wehrmacht. Similar advertisements appear regularly in West German newspapers: what is special about this particular one is that it is addressed to German-Canadians.

The Canadian Newspaper "Toronto Daily Star", commenting on the advertisement on September 9th, stated:

"An advertisement that would have been brushed off as fantastic and unthinkable had it been predicted 15 years ago has turned up in Canada's German-language press.

"Inviting German-Canadians to apply for permanent-force cadetships, with a view to becoming professional officers in the army, navy and air force of West Germany, the ad appears in the Canadian edition of Die Zeit. Die Zeit, controlled from Hamburg, has Argentina, Canadian, US and South African editions. The Canadian edition has its business and editorial offices on Spadina Ave., Toronto . . .

"Queried in Ottawa, citizenship and immigration officials raised their eyebrows when they heard about the ad but said that as far as they knew there was no law against it.

"German-Canadian sources in Toronto doubted the ad would attract many persons, since what it represents is exactly the cause of many Germans leaving for Canada . . ."

(Footnote: "Die Zeit", the newspaper concerned, also prints editions in the USA, Argentina, and South Africa. GERMAN REPORT appeals to readers in those countries to check whether similar ads have appeared in German-language newspapers there.

BONN SOLDIERS FOR FRANCE

West German Wehrmacht troops will soon be garrisoning West German supply bases in France, and using French training areas, "The Times" of London reported on September 21st. The last German troops in France were the nazi armies thrown out in 1944.

The "Times" report stated:

"Negotiations are expected to be completed within the next few days preparatory to an agreement granting the Bundeswehr extensive supply bases in France . . . The result of the negotiations is likely to be that a number of bases will be made available to west Germany in the immediate future, followed later by a formal agreement covering not only the supply bases but the use by west German troops of French training areas.

"In the negotiations with France, as with other countries, the chief difficulty has been the question of garrisoning and administration . . . On the bases in Holland and Belgium, the number of west Germans is to be extremely small, but in France the Defence Ministry expects that almost the whole responsibility will be taken over by the Bundeswehr."

W. German Capital in Congo

West German capitalists are angling to take over a share of the mining interests in Katanga, the Belgian-sponsored break-away from the Congo Republic, the London "Daily Express" reported on September 21st.

The report, from a "Daily Express" reporter on the spot, inferred that the West German bid had the support of American Ambassador Clare Timberlake. The report said:

"Timberlake is known to be immensely pro-German. His last post was Bonn and men who know him say it has left its mark".

Government and big business circles in West Germany have been anxious for some years to get a solid toe-hold in Africa.

SS Killer Names Accomplices

"The big shots should be with me in the dock," complained SS-man August Hoehn during a trial in Dusseldorf, West Germany on September 20th. Hoehn, who had been second-in-command at the nazi concentration camp of Sachsenhausen, is now on trial for the murder of thousands of camp inmates.

Then he went on to name names of other men involved in killing anti-fascists from France, Germany, Britain and other countries, including at least 10,000 Soviet prisoners of war murdered in one "special action". They were:

August Kolb, once head of the camp and responsible for 40,000 deaths while he was in charge, now at liberty in Nuremberg, West Germany.

Fritz Cornely, SS officer in Sachsenhausen Camp, who staged a mass murder of German and French prisoners on October 11th 1944, today top detective officer in Cologne.

Erwin Brandt, Gestapo officer, who joined with Cornely in the murder, today a leading official in the Flick industrial combine.

Kurt Erdmann, Gestapo boss in Sachsenhausen, today a detective officer in Stade, West Germany.

Dr. Heinz Baumkoetter, top concentration camp doctor and SS officer, who took part in many executions, now at liberty in Muenster, West Germany.

Most West German newspapers, in their reports of the trial, suppressed the names given by Hoehn.

Hoehn was originally tried and sentenced as a war criminal by the Soviet Union in 1946. He was handed over to West German authorities in 1956 as a non-amnestied war criminal under the terms of an agreement between the two countries. The West Germans freed him immediately and granted him 6000 marks (about £500) as "compensation". After four years delay, public pressure has finally resulted in the trial of three of the Sachsenhausen camp officials, Hoehn, Boehm and Hempel.

The West German committee of ex-Sachsenhausen inmates listed a sampling of 13 other guards, doctors and Gestapo leaders who are still living unpunished in West Germany.

Note: Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp lay a few miles north of Berlin. The German Democratic Republic is erecting an impressive memorial and museum on the site, due for opening in April 1960. Similar memorials have been built at Buchenwald and Ravensbrueck. The memorials, visited every year by hundreds of thousands, have been financed by public subscription and the issue of special commemorative stamps.

"GERMAN PARTY" EXITS

The "German Party" in West Germany, a right-wing assembly of conservative neo-nazis, has practically ceased to exist since most of its leading members have found a spiritual new home in Chancellor Adenauer's Christian Democratic Union.

Among the nine "German Party" members of Parliament (from a total of fifteen) who have now switched allegiance to Adenauer by joining his party are the following men:

Transport Minister Hans-Christoph Seebohm, who claims to lead Germans resettled from the "Sudeten" area of Czechoslovakia. Noteworthy for statements like: "European culture can only be found where Germans live" (August 9th 1952) or "The German East ... includes not only the Elbe and the Oder, but also Bohemia and all areas in which Germans once settled." (August 2nd 1953)

Minister for the Upper House Hans Joachim von Merkatz, who was until 1945 director of the Ibero-American Institute in Berlin, a centre of nazi spy activity in Latin America. On February 24th 1955 he declared, "We have gambled with the inheritance of our grandfathers. Now we must win back what Bismarck and others won."

Viktor Emmanuel Preusker (once Housing Minister). He joined the SS in 1933 and was soon working as an SS instructor on "racial questions" and as an "aryanisation expert" for the Dresdner Bank, one of the main pro-nazi financial concerns. The bank awarded him a special diploma in 1939 for his work "in freeing the German economy from the Jewish yoke".

The ministerial posts of Seebohm and von Merkatz will not be affected by their switch of parties.

Jewish Cemetery Restored

East Berliners have put in 5000 hours of voluntary work to restore the old Jewish cemetery in the Schoenhauser Allee, which was laid waste by the nazis. Gravestones have been re-erected, and bushes and flowers planted. Particular help has been given by tram workers, printing workers and coal delivery men from nearby depots.

The small Jewish community in East Berlin, less than 1000 strong, is too small to tend properly the several big Jewish cemeteries located in this part of the city. Most of the members of the community, who have a restored synagogue and kosher butcher at their disposal, are old people who managed by chance to survive the nazi liquidation of Europe's Jews.

LAST HOMAGE TO WILHELM PIECK

The last remains of President Wilhelm Pieck were interred on September 23rd in a simple ceremony at the Socialist Memorial Cemetery in Berlin, near the graves of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, his one-time comrades, who had been laid to rest more than 40 years previously.

The funeral ceremony on Saturday, September 10th closed with a long procession of mourning vehicles which followed the caisson bearing the coffin with the late President's body. The streets along the route were lined with many tens of thousands of Berliners.

Foreign guests at the government ceremony included L. I. Breshnev, head of state of the Soviet Union, the Polish head of state Aleksander Zawadzki, government leaders from Cuba, Yugoslavia and all socialist countries and representatives of the Communist and Workers' Parties of Europe and many countries in Asia and America.

Among condolences received in the GDR were messages from President Rajendra Prasad of India, Prime Minister Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia, Presidents Nasser of the United Arab Republic, Urho Kekkonen of Finland, Habib Bourgiba of Tunisia, Archbishop Makarios of Cyprus, and top government leaders of Iraq, Cuba, Guinea as well as all the socialist countries.

Carpets For Damascus

The German Democratic Republic supplied much of the machinery for a new carpet factory in Damascus (Syrian region of the United Arab Republic).

NO GERMAN SOLDIERS BY 1964

GDR Memorandum to UN General Assembly

The German Democratic Republic has proposed to the United Nations that the whole of Germany should be neutralised and disarmed by 1964. A short summary of the GDR proposals was printed in GERMAN REPORT of September 16th. Here, slightly shortened, is the text of the memorandum submitted by the Government of the German Democratic Republic to the 15th General Assembly of the United Nations, which began its meeting in New York on September 20th:

Two world wars have had their origins on German soil. This lays upon the German people and the two German governments the responsibility of making particularly great efforts to make peace secure and to prevent a war. The Potsdam Agreement, agreed upon by the Soviet Union, the USA, Britain and France, imposed the pledge to extirpate militarism and revanchism, so that other peoples shall never again be threatened by Germany.

The Government of the German Democratic Republic is guided by the principle that a suitable contribution of the German states must be that they begin without delay with general and complete disarmament in Germany.

In view of the total militarisation and atomic armament which is going on in West Germany, it is urgently necessary to carry out swiftly disarmament measures in Germany. The West German Federal Government is crudely infringing the principles laid down by the states of the anti-Hitler coalition at the end of the Second World War for the formation of a demilitarised and peace-loving Germany. It refuses to recognise the results of the Second World War. It makes territorial claims on many European states and rejects the policy of peaceful co-existence.

The Hitlerite generals who are once again in command in West Germany have presented a memorandum containing a programme for the all-out remilitarisation of West Germany. This programme calls for the forcible recruitment of the entire male population capable of bearing arms, the unlimited equipment of the Wehrmacht with nuclear and rocket weapons and the most modern jet planes, a powerful navy unlimited in tonnage and armament, and finally the moving forward of the Wehrmacht, and the extension of its communications in the member states of NATO far outside the frontiers of the Federal Republic. The Generals' Memorandum, which was drafted and published with the full agreement of the West German Government, proves that they are taking a course towards rocket and atomic warfare. This armament policy is accompanied by a steadily increasing campaign of hate propaganda on the part of the revanchist organisations in West Germany. Ministers of the West German Government are speakers at all important rallies in this hate campaign, thus showing that revanchism has become state policy in West Germany.

Atomic armament and revanchism, however, are completely contrary not only to the Potsdam Agreement and the United Nations Charter, but also to the unconditional surrender which was signed by the Supreme Command of the Hitlerite Wehrmacht to which the generals who today form the Leadership Staff of the West German Wehrmacht belonged.

The comprehensive armament measures of the West German Federal Government, and the increasing war propaganda, have created in West Germany a potential war focus which can become extremely dangerous. This focus of war threatens the peace of the German people, the peace of the peoples of Europe, and in addition the peace of the world.

In the interests of the maintenance of peace the speediest disarmament measures are therefore necessary in Germany. Such measures would make possible the neutrality of the two German states, and thus prevent the outbreak of wars in Europe. General and complete disarmament would correspond particularly well with the national interest of the German people. Even the beginning of the first practical measures for disarmament would remove the main obstacle which at present prevents an understanding between the two German states on their reunification.

The central theme in the 15th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations will be the proposal made by the Government of the USSR for discussions and decisions on general and complete disarmament. The Government of the German Democratic Republic, guided by the wish to make a constructive contribution to the implementation of general disarmament, and guided by its responsibility for peace and the national interests of the German people, submits to the 15th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations the following proposals for the stages of implementation of general and complete disarmament in both German states:

A) The general and complete disarmament of both German states in three stages:

Stage I (1960/61)

1. Both German states renounce the use of force against each other and against third parties in declarations valid in international law which shall be deposited with the Secretary General of the United Nations.
2. Both German states agree on an arms stop. They give pledges that after announcing the state of their forces and armaments they will leave them at this level, and not undertake further reinforcement.
3. Both German states renounce atomic armament. They give pledges that they will not manufacture nuclear and rocket weapons, participate in their manufacture in other states, purchase or accept such weapons, or participate in the nuclear weapons tests of other states. The stationing of further foreign atomic weapons will be immediately stopped.
4. Both German states give pledges that they will not manufacture chemical or biological weapons, participate in their manufacture in other states, purchase or accept such weapons, or participate in the testing of such weapons in other states.
5. Both states prevent in their territory all war propaganda and propaganda for territorial claims against other states.
6. The conclusion of a peace treaty with both German states and the conversion of West Berlin into a demilitarised Free City. For this purpose the powers of the anti-Hitler coalition shall summon a peace conference, in which the representatives of both German states will take part.

Stage II (1962)

1. Both German states reduce their forces and armament. The war material thus released shall be destroyed or converted to peaceful use. Military expenditure shall be reduced. The deployment of

the remaining forces shall be agreed.

2. Both German states renounce conscription. The law on the introduction of military conscription in West Germany will be annulled.
3. On the basis of the peace treaty concluded earlier, the four states which signed the Potsdam Agreement shall agree with the two German states on the withdrawal of all foreign troops and the liquidation of all their bases and depots. This will remove all remainders of the Second World War, and create the conditions most necessary for the implementation of the right of self determination of the German people.
4. The rocket weapons in the possession of German armed forces will be destroyed.

Stage III (1963—64)

1. The armed forces of both German states will be finally dissolved, and weapons, ammunition and military equipment of all kinds shall be destroyed or converted to peaceful use.
2. For the maintenance of internal law and order the two German states shall retain police forces, the strength, armament and deployment of which shall be agreed.
3. Production for military purposes in both German states shall be ended. The factories concerned shall be converted to peace production.
4. In both German states all military institutions (the relevant ministries, leadership staffs, military academies, registration offices etc.) shall be dissolved.
5. Both German states cancel their membership in NATO or the Warsaw Treaty; this will free Germany of connections with military blocks. Both German states declare their neutrality which shall be guaranteed by the main powers of the anti-Hitler coalition or by the United Nations.

B. The utilisation of the money made available by general and complete disarmament

The two German states shall devote the resources made available by disarmament to housing, the extension of social services, the increasing of pensions, for scientific and cultural purposes, and for aid to those countries poorly developed in the economic field.

C. Control measures

For the control of the measures proposed a control organ shall be established consisting on a basis of parity of representatives of the People's Chamber of the German Democratic Republic and the West German Bundestag, as well as representatives of the trade unions and other democratic mass organisations, such as women's and youth organisations.

The control organ shall begin its activities as soon as an agreement has been reached between the two German states, or as soon as a relevant decision has been taken by the United Nations. It will be equipped with plenipotentiary powers to supervise disarmament in the two German states in accordance with the steps foreseen in the individual stages.

•

The overwhelming majority of the German people would welcome a decision of the General Assembly of the United Nations on general and complete disarmament, with special disarmament regulations for Germany, as an important decision for the maintenance of peace by means of peaceful coexistence, a decision which would at the same time help the German people to open the door for the democratic and peaceful reunification of Germany. The reunification of Germany is a matter for the German people themselves and for the two German states. Reunification, however, is dependent upon disarmament and the conclusion of a peace treaty with both German states.

The conclusion of the peace treaty and the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Germany foreseen in Stage II would create the most important conditions necessary for the **entire** German people to exercise the right of self determination.

The Government of the German Democratic Republic is sure that it is acting in the spirit of the United Nations Charter in taking this initiative for general and complete disarmament in both German states.

N. Y. Times Tries to Whitewash Envoy

The scholarly "New York Times" printed on September 10th a flattering profile of Professor Wilhelm Grewe, West German Ambassador in Washington.

After a fulsome account of Professor Grewe's "distinguished career" and "key role in shaping the democratic institutions established in West Germany", the New York newspaper went on to state:

"The East German Communists assert that Dr Grewe deliberately helped Hitler's cause by using his talents to justify Nazi law. He has denied this, and an American who knows him said recently: 'Like so many of his colleagues, he had joined the Nazi party partly to protect his job and partly to prevent the real Nazis from taking over the whole Government'."

The old nazi files tell a different story. His personal file from the nazi Ministry of Education contains a short autobiographical summary submitted by Herr Grewe in July 1941 when he was applying for promotion at Berlin University. This note, signed in Grewe's own hand, reveals that he became an active nazi in 1928, five years before Hitler took power, and joined the nazi party in 1933 when he was still a student and long before he had any official job. His autobiographical note stated in part:

"In Hamburg I participated in the foundation of the National Socialist Scholars' League in 1928, and was a member until 1930. I joined the Nazi Party on May 1st 1933. From 1933—34 I was a member of the National Socialist Students League, and conducted student study groups in Freiburg and Frankfurt. During vacation I acted as education officer for the Hitler Youth in Altona. I have been a member of the National Socialist Jurists League since 1935, and I am also a member of the National Socialist Altherrenbund, and the National Socialist League of University Teachers."

During the Second World War Professor Grewe held a professorship at the purely nazi "College for Politics" in Berlin. In the "Zeitschrift fuer Politik", 1942, page 202, he expressed his nazi sympathies quite explicitly: "National Socialist and folkish feeling for law form the inalienable basis for all philosophical thinking."

After the defeat of nazism Professor Grewe publicly objected to the trial of war criminals. At a jurists' discussion in October 1946 in Stuttgart on the subject of the Nuremberg War Crimes Trial he was the main lecturer, and stated:

"The victors are not entitled to sit in judgement on the defeated ... The accused should not be punished, because the acts were not punishable at the time of their commission."

(More information on the nazi past of Professor Grewe, together with photostatic copies of some of the documents, may be found in GERMAN REPORT May 8th and June 19th 1959.)

STATE COUNCIL HEADS GDR

New Body Replaces President

The post of President of the German Democratic Republic, which fell vacant as the result of the death of President Wilhelm Pieck on September 7th, has been abolished. The People's Chamber voted on September 12th to establish in place of the presidency a 24-man State Council under the chairmanship of Walter Ulbricht, previously Deputy Prime Minister and First Secretary of the Socialist Unity Party. Walter Ulbricht thus becomes for practical purposes head of state of the GDR.

The constitutional change was officially stated to bring the constitution into line with the present state of social development of the German workers' and peasants' state.

Here are short biographical notes on the members of the State Council of the GDR, unanimously elected by the People's Chamber on September 12th:

Chairman of the State Council

Walter Ulbricht, 67, First Secretary of the Socialist Unity Party. Carpenter by trade, arrested in World War One for anti-militarist activity. Communist M. P. during the Weimar Republic. During the Second World War did front-line anti-nazi work at Stalingrad and elsewhere. Since 1949 First Deputy Prime Minister of the GDR, a post which he relinquished on election to the State Council.

Deputy Chairmen of the State Council

Otto Grotewohl, 66, Prime Minister of the GDR since 1949. Printer by trade. Member of the Social Democratic Party from 1912, Provincial Minister of the Interior in Brunswick in 1923. Social Democratic M. P. from 1925 to 1933. Illegal anti-nazi work in Germany, twice arrested. In 1946 helped unite Social Democratic and Communist Parties in East Germany into Socialist Unity Party.

Johannes Dieckmann, 67, Chairman of the People's Chamber. Journalist and economist by trade. M. P. for the German People's Party in the Saxon Provincial Parliament. During the nazi period in the coal industry. One of the founders of the Liberal Democratic Party after the war.

Gerald Goetting, 37, Secretary of the Christian Democratic Union of the GDR since 1949. Member of the People's Chamber.

Heinrich Homann, 49, Deputy Chairman of the People's Chamber. Professional soldier, helped to found the Free German Movement in the Soviet Union in 1943, did dangerous front-line anti-nazi work. Deputy Chairman of the National Democratic Party.

Manfred Gerlach, 32, Member of the People's Chamber. Secretary General of the Liberal Democratic Party since 1954.

Hans Rietz, 45, mechanic by trade. Joined the Young Communist League in 1928, conscripted into the Wehrmacht, worked as anti-fascist lecturer in POW camps. Represents the Democratic Peasant Party in the People's Chamber.

Members of the State Council

Bruno Leuschner, 50, office worker by trade. Joined the Communist Party in 1930, spent ten years in nazi concentration camps. Since 1952 Chairman of the State Planning Commission, since 1955 Deputy Prime Minister.

Friedrich Ebert, 66, printer by trade. Son of first President of the Weimar Republic. Social Democratic MP from 1928 to 1933. Thrown into concentration camp by nazis, did underground work after release. Since 1948 Lord Mayor of Democratic Berlin. Member of the Politburo of the Socialist Unity Party.

Professor Erich Correns 64, research chemist. His wife was murdered by the nazis. Since 1950 Chairman of the National Council of the National Front.

Professor Peter-Adolf Thiessen, 61, physicist. Worked from 1945 to 1956 in the Soviet Union as top-rank research expert in the Soviet Union. Holder of the Lenin Prize. Chairman of the Research Council of the GDR.

Professor Karl Polak, 54, constitutional lawyer. Forced to emigrate by the nazis, he spent the war years in the Soviet Union. Member of the People's Chamber.

Louise Ermisch, 43, clothing worker. Prominent in the activist movement in the clothing industry. Since 1957 candidate member of the Politburo of the Socialist Unity Party.

Professor Hans Rodenberg, 65, theatre director. Worked on Soviet films and for Moscow Radio during the nazi period. Deputy Minister of Culture.

Karl Mewis, 53, mechanic. Joined the Communist Party in 1924. Active anti-nazi work throughout Hitler period, soldier in the International Brigade in Spain. Since 1958 candidate member of the Politburo of the Socialist Unity Party.

Erich Gruetzner, 50, metal worker. Joined Communist Party in 1932. Imprisoned by nazis. Member of the People's Chamber.

Bernard Koenen, 71, metal worker. Joined the Social Democratic Party in 1907, the Communist Party in 1920. Prominent in the armed struggle of the German workers against the reactionaries in the years 1918—1923. Forced to emigrate to the Soviet Union by the nazis. Member of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party.

Karl Rieke, 31, farmer. Joined the Socialist Unity Party in 1948. Chairman of an agricultural production cooperative.

Guenter Christoph, 27, metal worker. Joined the Socialist Unity Party in 1958. Prominent in the activist movement in the engineering industry.

Friedrich Kind, 32, mechanic. District chairman of the Christian Democratic Union, and member of the People's Chamber.

Irmgard Neumann, 35, farmer. Local official of the Democratic Peasant Party, and leading member of an agricultural production cooperative.

Otto Krauss, 75, office worker. Local official of the Liberal Democratic Party, and member of the People's Chamber.

Horst Schumann, 36, piano maker. Active from 1940 in the resistance group of his father who was murdered by the nazis. First Secretary of the Free German Youth.

Secretary of the State Council

Otto Gotsche, 56, plumber. Arrested by the nazis for anti-fascist activity. Author of several anti-fascist novels.

A RIDE THROUGH EAST BERLIN

By Allen Mann

Every day, going to and from work, I see a crosscut of East Berlin from my window in the "S-Bahn", the elevated city railroad which connects all parts of the city, East, West, North and South. (Yes, the latter two directions also exist here in Berlin). Here are some of the things I notice every morning — some pleasant, some not so nice.

Before I have traveled very far, I see off to my left something very optimistic-looking; the big new housing project going up in Baumschulenweg, an East Berlin suburb. A dozen big cranes and whole machine parks of cement mixers, trucks and other equipment are at work building over 40 new apartment buildings, with a total of about 1500 flats. They will vary from two to four rooms each, always plus kitchen and bath, of course. They are being constructed for several workers' housing cooperatives and will be followed by new schools or nurseries, laundries and shops — sooner than in some cases in the past, I hope. After completion, lawns and little playgrounds will separate the big buildings.

Then, after the one big building project is past, another one looms into view on the right in the Plänterwald suburb. Here, however, most of the buildings are already occupied. East Berlin's main new architectural style may be recognised clearly here: four or five storey buildings with five entrances and staircases, flat roofs and little balconies for almost every flat. Although various shades of stucco are used, it is the balconies which provide the main variety; they are painted in a rainbow assortment of pastel colours and then decorated by their owners with flowers, thus counteracting any impression of sameness. Other experiments in decorating the narrow ends of the buildings with assorted geometrical designs like rings, squares and checkerboard patterns are occasionally seen.

After one more "S-Bahn" station I reach Treptower Park with its trees and lawns, its river-bank restaurants and little public observatory, and, in summer, its outdoor "Sculpture and Flowers" exhibition. Through the trees I can just glimpse the famous Soviet memorial which is the tourist goal of a never-ending stream of visitors from East and West. The centre of the memorial is the giant form of a Soviet soldier holding a little child in his arms and with a smashed swastika under his heel. Several thousand Soviet soldiers who fell in the Battle of Berlin are buried here.

The train then passes a huge factory for electrical equipment — Berlin's main industry — and in the distance rise the huge smoke stacks of the main power plant which pollutes the air in this section of the city. Radical smoke prevention measures will soon end this nuisance.

Crossing over Berlin's main river, the Spree (pronounced Shpray) I look down at the docks of the "White Fleet" and see a few of its pleasure launches loading on passengers for trips through the many lakes and waterways which make Berlin's surroundings so pleasant.

But here in the city the scenery starts to get less inviting. Small, ugly factory buildings alternate with old tenements with chipped, colourless stucco. It is a relief to notice that more and more are at last being renovated and gaps left by the war are disappearing.

One of the stops is at Ostkreuz Junction, and the Lord help anyone who has to change trains here, for it is certainly one of the most confusing stations in the world, with countless platforms at all possible angles and levels. Even old-time Berliners sometimes confess their confusion when asked directions here.

After passing the "Ostbahnhof", East Berlin's main railroad station, the train reaches an area which is not the prettiest, but the most interesting to watch every morning. Here, just east of the main centre of the city, was a working-class tenement area where the bombing damage was especially heavy. It was here that the famous Stalin Allee, a mile-long stretch of new apartment buildings and stores was built, but from the S-Bahn only the four highest buildings could be seen. All the rest was hidden behind a mass of hideous old buildings, ruins and half-ruins containing a few livable flats which were needed badly enough to prevent the old shell from being torn down. The area was terribly depressing to see, and every visitor coming from other parts of the country or from other countries by train to East Berlin had to pass this area, certainly the worst in the city.

But now, finally, this is being remedied. The Stalin Allee (Allee means avenue in German) is now being extended into the centre of the city with a new, simple architectural style based on pre-fabricated sections, and one beat-up old building after another is being torn down to make way for a large-scale housing and shopping section bigger than any other in East Berlin. There will also be a big new hotel, a super-modern cinema theatre and café, a big teacher's clubhouse building and many other attractions.

The tearing-down process never seems to proceed rapidly enough for my taste, but nevertheless, month for month, the old wrecks disappear and I can see the new white buildings going up behind them.

My train now reaches "Alex" — the Berliner's nickname for the square called Alexander Platz, a shopping centre also battered heavily during the war. The extension of Stalin Allee will end here and many new buildings will join the present department store, book shops and city council buildings.

Win a New Reader

Fill in the name and address of a friend, work-mate or acquaintance on the form below, and send it to

Democratic German Report
Friedrichstrasse 167/III
Berlin W 8, Germany

We shall be pleased to mail sample copies of the paper to him or her.

Name .....

Address .....

Arriving once more at the now divided Spree River, my train crosses Museum Island with its National Art Gallery and fine collections of Egyptian, Greek, Babylonian and other treasures.

Then, finally, the train pulls into Friedrich Strasse station, which is the city centre for the East Berliners. Within a few blocks are the beautifully-renovated State Opera House, the Comic Opera, the Friedrichstadt "Palace" with its variety shows, the operetta theatre and circus and, of course, the famous Berliner Ensemble, home of the plays of Bertolt Brecht. Also nearby is the equally well-known Unter den Linden boulevard which leads up to the Brandenburg Gate. This is also an area full of government ministries and offices, newspaper buildings and publishing houses.

Friedrich Strasse station is also interesting for another reason. Throughout the whole stretch I travel every morning, the S-Bahn tracks are almost never much more than a half-mile from the zig-zag border line between East and West Berlin. Sometimes the distance is much less. After Friedrich Strasse, however, my train finally crosses this border and enters West Berlin. (After another hour, it then leaves Berlin entirely and enters the GDR district of Potsdam.)

But this fateful border-crossing from one world to another is hardly noticeable. Most people get off the train here, but many remain seated. There is a perfunctory check by customs men looking for smugglers (for smuggling is also a main "industry" in a city with two currencies). Usually the customs man just walks down the length of the train, on the outside, but occasionally someone may be asked to open his valises or bags, as at any customs station. But this is only a very infrequent formality; soon the railwayman raises his stick with its green circle, the doors close and the train is on its way. But my morning's ride ends at Friedrich Strasse, where I work.

Naturally, there are also many other routes cutting though the big city — with the elevated S-Bahn as well as with the underground, the tram or the bus. Each one shows a different sector of the city. The picture is similar in general, with many new buildings and whole projects, but also with too many remnants of the past, especially in the central areas. These are slowly but steadily being healed. Scattered throughout the city are also numerous green patches of lawns, flower-beds and trees; in the outskirts these become large, pleasant parks with lakes for swimming and boating. New swimming pools and children's playgrounds are also improving the looks of the city. I think that the next two or three years will alter East Berlin so appreciably that it will be a pleasure for all to visit.

Buchwald Meets a German Steel King

(Art Buchwald, American journalist, is the professional funny man of the "New York Herald Tribune". Sometimes his humour has a bite, and we believe that readers of GERMAN REPORT will appreciate the following satire.)

Traveling the way we do, we're always running into interesting people. The other day on our way up from Rome we met a white-haired German business man. This was our end of the conversation.

"Yes, I speak English... No, I'm not English, I'm American. Oh, you're German... Thank you for your card... Here's mine... I see you're in the steel business. That must be a good business. . . . Oh, you once owned your own steel plant in Leipzig? Before the war? During the war... The British and the Americans destroyed your plant? How?... with bombs. That's a shame. Were they big bombs?... Very big bombs. That really is a shame... They destroyed your plant twice. You rebuilt it and then they destroyed it again. ... That's terrible. They shouldn't have done it. I mean, after all it was your plant and... Were they high-flying planes or low-flying planes?... You couldn't tell because you were in a bomb shelter... But the bombs made a lot of noise?... I can appreciate how you felt...

"But isn't Leipzig in the Eastern zone?... Then you were captured by the Russians? Did they throw you in prison?... Only for a couple of weeks? That's too bad. I mean that's bad that they threw you in prison... Did they mistreat you? They did... Isn't that awful. I bet they tortured you ... They did! Isn't that wonderful. I mean isn't that wonderful that they didn't torture you more than two weeks... Were you a member of the Nazi party?... Naturally, of course you weren't... I'm sorry I asked...

"I see... All you did was make steel for the army... You had to. Of course you did... No, I wasn't in the Air Force. I was in the Marines. We were in the Pacific. We didn't bomb any German steel plants... We wanted to... that is to say, we wanted to be in the European theater. Everybody during the war wanted to be some place else... No, I'm not bitter about the war. I've got nothing against the Germans, particularly somebody who made steel. It isn't as if you were fighting us... After all, you can make other things with steel besides guns... like Venetian blinds or air-conditioning units. I'll bet that's what your plant made... You made steel hospital beds? There, what did I tell you! I knew you were the type of person that wouldn't make war equipment... Tell me, did anyone else torture you besides the Russians? The East German Communists arrested you but didn't torture you?... What's wrong with them?... No, I mean what's their problem. I didn't mean what was wrong with them for not torturing you... You'll have to excuse me, my English isn't so good.

"No, I don't speak German. I live in France... Oh yes, I like it very much... You had French workers working for you during the war?... Did they work well?... Not so good? . . .They work much better now . . . I guess during the war they didn't like to work so much... The French are funny that way. Put them in their own steel plant and they'll work like mad . . . but send them to a German steel plant and they'll goof off every time . . .

"I see by your card you're still in the steel business. In West Germany. How's it going? . . . Very good . . . That's too bad. I mean that's too bad that you can't be in the steel business in East Germany.

"I'll bet you're furious at the Americans and British for destroying your plant . . . You're not any more because now they're among your best customers? And you say your business is even bigger than it was before the war? . . . That's wonderful, really, really wonderful . . .

"No, stewardess, I don't want any lunch. For some reason I just lost my appetite."

(New York Herald Tribune" Paris Edition, September 6th)

BERLIN NOTEBOOK

Old horror stories never die, I suppose, but it was a bit of a shock to find an apparently respectable British magazine stating recently that girls were fleeing from the German Democratic Republic to West Germany because they would otherwise be sent to the salt mines.

This hair-raising story appeared, I am sorry to say, in the magazine "The World's Children", published by the highly respectable "Save the Children Fund" in London. It was printed in the Spring issue of the magazine, which has only just been sent me by a reader in Australia.

The magazine published an article on the migration of Germans in Europe after the war, with particular emphasis on those people moving from East to West Germany. The article states at the beginning:

"No attempt is made to emphasise the more distressing aspects of the refugee problem, but rather to make a plain statement of fact ... (Here is) a verbatim extract from a report made after a visit in September 1952 to Uelzen, and to a number of camps from the north to the south of West Germany ... The description given below is true in principle to this day, if account is taken of the various changes in circumstances which will be mentioned later."

Salt Mines

And then comes this 1952 report, described as being true in principle to this day:

"The broad reason why there are so many refugees from the E. Zone of Germany is, of course, that it is Communist controlled. The detailed reasons are many and varied. The age group of 16-25 has two dominant reasons — conscription and forced labour camps, the girls commonly being sent to the salt mines."

Now the facts are these: neither in 1952 nor today was there conscription in the German Democratic Republic; neither in 1952 nor today were there forced labour camps in the German Democratic Republic; neither in 1952 nor 1960 were girls (or boys, or men, or women) sent to the salt mines.

There are, in fact, some salt mines in the German Democratic Republic. The people who work there do so because it is their job: if they want to quit and go to work as bricklayers or shop assistants they can do so, but they probably won't because mining, even in a salt-mine, is a very well paid job in the German Democratic Republic.

By John Peet

But to get back to the "Save the Children Fund". I can only assume that the well-meaning people who published this article have allowed themselves to be fooled by West German cold war propagandists.

I am writing to the journal concerned, offering a donation of five guineas to the "Save the Children Fund" if they can produce for me just one properly authenticated case of a girl in Democratic Germany being "sent to the salt mines". Since they are allegedly "commonly" sent, and since hundreds of thousands of people have migrated from East to West Germany since this report was written in 1952, it should be quite easy to find just one.

I look forward to letting readers know what happens.

True to Form

Constant readers will remember that in "Berlin Notebook" on June 24th this year I warned them that the summer always brings lots of visitors to Berlin, and that the visitors often provided newspapers in the western world with "I was there" eyewitness reports on life in Berlin. I wrote at that time "The general trend of these articles is that West Berlin is bustling and booming, while East Berlin looks like a morgue, full of uncleared ruins".

On August 5th the "Guardian" of Manchester ran magnificently true to form. A roving correspondent named Taya Zinkin produced an article which takes some sort of a record for high nonsense content. Here are just a few exerpts:

"East Berlin, with its grandiose ruins, is like a city under curfew. No people, no cars, emptiness ... Like a gigantic cardboard stucco set after shooting hours, the streets of East Berlin are deserted . . . There is hardly anybody in the streets, not even a stray cat."

Trippers

As I explained in "Berlin Notebook" on June 24th, this impression arises when trippers from West Berlin confine their investigation to the area just east of the sector border, near the Brandenburger Tor or the Potsdamer Platz. As it happens, these two entries into East Berlin lead them straight into two of the worst devastated areas of the old commercial centre of the city, and they see a lot of ruins still uncleared, and not very much life. If they take the trouble to go a little further they find that East Berlin is a busy bustling city, much like any other European city. After all, it is the capital of a country which stands fifth in industrial production in Europe.

But the "Guardian" correspondent is not content to report misleadingly on a lightning visit to an untypical area: she produces one real boner. Here it is:

"Fairly near the grass mound which was Hitler's bunker stands the superb building of the 'High Party Marx Engels University' which my guide explained is only for the children of the new elite."

Her guide must have been more than usually unreliable. There is only one moderately impressive building anywhere near the site of Hitler's bunker, and this is Goebbel's old Propaganda Ministry, which today houses a publishing firm, a government department, and the Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries. There is a nursery school there too, for the children of employees, but even the most misleading correspondent could scarcely classify this as a university.

"Fairly Near"

About half a mile away (this could be classified as "fairly near", I suppose) there is the main building of the Berlin University, but it is named the Humboldt University, after Wilhelm von Humboldt, famous German scientist. There is a "Karl Marx University", but that is in Leipzig, more than 100 miles away.

If Miss Zinkin means anything, which I doubt, she can only mean the "Karl Marx Party School of the Socialist Unity Party", where party officials go through a tough two-year course in philosophy, economics and so on: but this is housed in a rather scruffy red-brick building miles away from the site of Hitler's bunker.

Since I am being so lavish with the offer of rewards this week, let me make an offer: when Miss Zinkin comes to Berlin again she should show me "the superb building of the High Party Marx Engels University fairly near Hitler's bunker". I promise to stand her the best dinner that East Berlin can provide, with all the caviar she can eat.

Edited and published fortnightly by John Peet. Democratic German Report, Friedrichstrasse 167/III, Berlin W 8, Telephone 22 29 68. Printed in Germany by (204). Veröffentlicht unter Lizenz-Nr. 694 beim Presseamt des Ministerpräsidenten der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik.